



August 31, 2026

Our 'What We Said' Report

**Reflections from Passamaquoddy
Territory to the Canadian Nuclear
Safety Commission in Response to
their 'Listening Tour'**

Published by the Passamaquoddy Recognition Group Inc.

This Report was published on August 31, 2026 by the Passamaquoddy Recognition Group Inc. (PRGI). It reflects contributions from respected and influential Peskotomuhkati and Wabanaki leaders, Chiefs, Elders, and youth.

Passamaquoddy Recognition Group Inc. (PRGI) represents the interests of the Peskotomuhkati Nation in Canada and the Peskotomuhkatik ecosystem. Our duty is to protect our lands, waters, and environment for all present and future generations.

Acknowledgements

We profoundly thank and acknowledge the words, voice, teachings and knowledge shared in this report and likewise, the burden and responsibility that accompanies our collective and individual experiences, in what was shared.

We thank Eric Treleaven for providing the photos and video included in this Report.





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Background

In May 2025, the Peskotomuhkati Nation gathered respected and influential Peskotomuhkati and Wabanaki leaders, Chiefs, Elders, and youth. Together, we met with staff from the federal nuclear regulator, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (“**CNSC**”) in Qonasqamkuk – what today is called Saint Andrews – in New Brunswick.



Through ceremony and dialogue, we engaged in a day and a half long pre-meeting with subject matter experts on nuclear energy and environmental management. We then partook in a day-long meeting with Canada’s nuclear safety regulator, the CNSC.

Regrettably, it was only after accepting the CNSC’s meeting invite, that PRGI fully understood it was meant as the CNSC’s “kickoff” to a broader Listening Tour CNSC staff were conducting to meet with Indigenous Nations impacted by nuclear activities. We had convened the meeting instead, based on an understanding that it was a normally-scheduled annual meeting. The CNSC’s Listening Tour agenda, the reasons for it and future plans, were not voluntarily shared by CNSC staff during the meeting.

Despite the time and effort we took to prepare and ensure the inclusion of our leaders, the CNSC did not send its leaders. Instead, staff who lacked the authority to weigh in on substantive reforms to the CNSC or answer basic questions about the only nuclear generating station outside of Ontario were sent to participate in “open, honest dialogue.”

For CNSC staff to have arrived unprepared for an audience with Indigenous leaders who represent thousands of people, is deeply disconcerting — particularly given Wabanaki peoples’ good-faith efforts to participate in the CNSC’s ‘Listening Tour.’ Experiencing, then sharing this summary of the events related to the Listening Tour has been exhausting, but a critically necessary exercise if we are to share **what we said**.

Intentions

Our intention in coming together was not to simply provide our feedback on how the CNSC might improve its existing processes and engagement practices.

We spoke and shared about:

- Indigenous laws, jurisdiction and responsibilities
- Our profound and ongoing distrust of the regulator and their continued disregard for our ability and right to decision-making that enables our free, prior and informed, consent (“**FPIC**”)
- The long-term consequences of nuclear waste; and our responsibilities to protect the water, all living things and generations not yet born.

We came with our histories, laws, responsibilities, our experiences with nuclear energy and the forever legacy it imposes, and our enduring relationship to the lands and waters that long predate the CNSC itself.

While the CNSC has since published its ‘What We Learned’ report reflecting on its Listening Tour, there’s a noticeable absence of PRGI, our comments, and position – as a nuclearized Nation.

The CNSC has since published its *What We Learned* report, describing what it heard through its Listening Tour.

This report, our *What We Said* report, records something different. It is our record – our public statement of what was said and shared.

Simply put, the CNSC failed to convey the purpose of this meeting and its broader relevance to us, despite seeking our active participation. The CNSC also placed obligations on the Nation to share, respond and guide its actions, without first ensuring its needs and motivations would not come at the Nation’s expense – in time, capacity and resources.

Meaningful engagement ought to be reciprocal. Those who come to listen must arrive prepared, respect the time, knowledge and resources we offer, and create the conditions for our meaningful participation.

The onus of improving the CNSC’s approach to Indigenous engagement should not be placed on Nations already burdened – without their consent – with the legacy of nuclear energy and its wastes.

Two of the three Peskotomuhkati Nation's communities sit within 50kms of the Point Lepreau Nuclear Generating Station. This nuclear site is also where future and additional nuclear is proposed. Point Lepreau Nuclear Generating Station was built and still operates on stolen Passamaquoddy Homeland, with no consent from the Passamaquoddy.

What's more, Canada continues to allow the Point Lepreau Nuclear Generating Station to operate, in violation of Article 29.2 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by allowing the stockpiling of hazardous wastes absent our free, prior and informed consent.

Article 29.2 of the UN Declaration is unequivocal:

States shall take effective measures to ensure that no storage or disposal of hazardous materials shall take place in the lands or territories of indigenous peoples without their free, prior and informed consent.



We invite you to watch the film version of our *What We Said* report by clicking [here](#) or the image above.

Contributions

Our position on nuclear power and its generation

This is the unambiguous, crystal-clear message that I want to relay to you. The Nation is 100 percent against nuclear and nuclear power generation, and even more than that, the waste that it generates.

We would like to proceed posthaste with the decommissioning of the Point Lepreau power project. That's what I said, and this is the message that I want to relay to you and the government agencies that you represent, unambiguously.

If there's any part of that message right now that you don't understand, please let me know and I'll try to make it as clear as I can.

Where does it all stop? I mean, I can understand that if it's something that we could work on and save, but there's no saving nuclear power, not with all the waste.

The rest of the uranium has to stay in the ground and the reliance on nuclear has to be reduced. 'Cause we're also responsible for all the people and everybody else, everything else that's within our territory.

The general consensus that I'm getting from my Elders, and those whose opinions truly matter to me in my heart and my spirit, is that we truly don't want this. We don't want that garbage sitting there for our great, great, great, great-grandchildren.

Let's say somebody consulted with us when they came and said that Point [Lepreau] would probably be a good place, and the consultation says, 'No, that's our territory.' So the answer would be no - we wouldn't be here today trying to figure [out] what to do with thousands of years in nuclear waste.

On consent, consultation and being heard

Consultation in the past has been coming in and informing us after the fact. That's not consultation. What gets industry and governments upset is the possibility of us saying no — and they have to respect that.

How can we have faith in this system when everything else has been destroying us and everything around us? If I had a fish left in my waters, maybe I would have faith in fisheries. How do I have faith in someone who has taken the last fish?

One of [our responsibilities] is protecting what the Creator provided, and that's the belief of all of First Nation here, and we need that acknowledged.

We pray that you not just listen to us, but hear. Two different things: listening and hearing. And understand what we're saying.

You can feel the weight in this room, and that saddened my heart every time I looked at somebody. Because we're never heard — we're never really heard. When a Native person speaks, they speak from their heart and they speak out of love. And I believe that's what we're all doing here. We're speaking from our hearts, and we're speaking out of love — not just for ourselves, but for our people to come. I hope you take that back and let them know where we stand as a people.



On nature and its protection

When we met the CNSC, we were aware of the recent Federal Court decision (2025 FC 319) from Justice Blackhawk that found:

- the CNCS erred in failing to consider UNDRIP and the FPIC standard
- the CNSC should incorporate Indigenous law, knowledge and practices into their processes

We were also aware that the basis for this ruling was in response to the Chalk River nuclear site, where a radioactive waste dump was proposed, named the Near Surface Disposal Facility (“NSDF”).

We were also aware that bear were being actively deterred and displaced from the footprint of the NSDF in preparation for construction.

Our leaders shared their response.

The bear is sacred. My clan is the Bear Clan and, historically, the bear was our medicine. We used the bear for our medicines; it cured certain illnesses. It holds a sacred place and is kept in our teachings as one of the symbols in our Seven Teachings.

To say the bear won't be allowed there, or that their habitat would be disrupted — how they normally live and breed — that will affect them. If it's not safe for the animal, how is it safe for human beings? Is that what you're saying — that this area is not safe for any living thing?

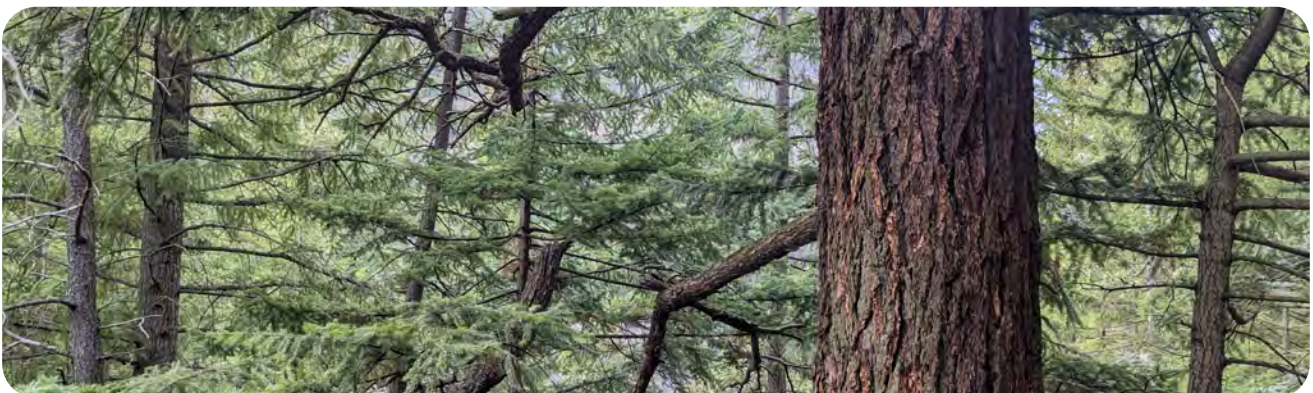
We understand that there are noisemakers that will keep the bears away from the site. But if you're going to fix something, what are you doing? Where are you putting back the woods? Where are you going to protect woods for these creatures and give them back their habitat? Who is doing that? Who is monitoring that whole system with those bears?

Because it's not good enough to say, 'Okay, we've taken over their habitat, and we're going to protect the bears by keeping them out.' That's not really protecting the bears. You've just driven them away from their home, their territory. So who is going to repair that? As far as I'm concerned, who's going to fix it?

Calls to Action

To Canada & the CNSC

- 1 Move from listening to action.** Clearly report back on what was heard, what will change as a result and if it cannot or will not change, why?
- 2 Recognize Indigenous Nations as decision-makers.** We are not simply stakeholders or advisors. Decision-making must respect Indigenous jurisdiction, our laws, Treaties, rights and responsibilities.
- 3 Engage well before decisions are made.** Indigenous Nations must be involved at the earliest stages of nuclear law reform, project planning and regulatory decision-making — not after fundamental choices have already been made and the direction set.
- 4 Respect our FPIC, Indigenous law and knowledge.** Indigenous knowledge must not simply be extracted; it bestows a legal order, responsibilities, and a framework through which decisions themselves are made. Our knowledge and practice is our law.
- 5 Take responsibility for the full nuclear lifecycle.** Nuclear decision-making must confront the unresolved intergenerational burden of radioactive waste, considering the cumulative consequences of producing additional waste where no means presently exist to eliminate its hazard. It must also recognize the imminent need to cease nuclear energy production on our territory where for decades, stockpiles of nuclear waste and a forever legacy has grown, absent our FPIC.



Additional Resources

Comments and Written Remarks

PRGI response to the “Getting Major Projects Built in Canada” and the “Strengthening One Canadian Economy through Trade and Transportation” Discussion Papers (20 July 2026)

Submission from PRGI to IAAC, “Peskotomuhkati Nation Response to Draft Integrated Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines – Deep Geological Repository (IAAC Reference No. 88774),” (8 May 2026)

Submission from PRGI to CNSC, “2024 Regulatory Oversight Report (ROR) for Nuclear Power Generating Sites” (28 Jan 2026)

Submission from PRGI to IAAC, “Peskotomuhkati Nation Response to NWMO’s Initial Project Description – Deep Geological Repository (IAAC Reference No. 88774)” (4 Feb 2026)

Comment from PRGI to IAAC, “Comments on the Draft Cooperation Agreement between New Brunswick and Canada and the One Project, One Review Discussion Paper” (7 Nov 2025)

Submission from PRGI to CNSC, “2023 Regulatory Oversight Report (ROR) for Nuclear Power Generating Sites” (11 Jan 2025)

Comment from PRGI to IAAC, “Comments from Peskotomuhkati Nation in response to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada’s Discussion Paper on the Review of the Physical Activities Regulations” (27 Sept 2024)

Letter from PRGI to Minister Wilkinson (NRCAN), “Request for NRCAN to fulfill the Crown’s consultation obligations for nuclear projects in Peskotomuhkati territory” (13 Sept 2024)

Letter from PRGI to Minister Guilbeault (ECCC), “Letter of Support – Request to Designate New Brunswick SMNR Demonstration Project for an Impact Assessment” (27 April 2023)

Submission from PRGI to CNSC, “Renewal of the Point Lepreau Nuclear Generating Station Power Reactor Operating Licence” (4 April 2022)

Reports and Online Resources

Bartlett, A., Atwin, R. & O'Donnell, S. (2024). Indigenous views on nuclear energy and radioactive waste. Passamaquoddy Recognition Group Inc. and the CEDAR project at St. Thomas University, Fredericton, New Brunswick, November.

Nuclear Playlist, YouTube Channel of Peskotomuhkati Nation at Skutik, [online](#).

